<u>Amendments to the Specification</u>:

Please replace the paragraph at page 11, lines 21-27 with the following amended paragraph:

The invention, as illustrated in Figure 1, preferably will have the user network interfaces at the two respective ends of a communication (originating and destination nodes 100, 130) agree, upon the initiation of a communication connection (i.e., during the setup of the communication using the various calls that occur), to recognize the common flag system. When a virtual connection is established between ~~to~~ <u>two</u> respective ends, then the flag system will preferably be agreed to at that point, and not each time a new discrete transmission of data packets occurs over the connection.

Please replace the paragraph at page 13, lines 4-17 with the following amended paragraph:

All that is necessary is that the end user and the data network adhere to the same standard for flagging suppressed channels, and that the data network be instructed as to what to substitute for the suppressed channel when it has to be extracted in a Ds0 switching matrix. By allowing intermediate nodes, for example backbone switches, 140 to identify suppressed channels through a simple flag and to substitute a unique pattern for the suppressed channels via a simple lookup mechanism, the intermediate nodes 140 will not need to have a digital signal processor to extract the silenced channels. Also, a digital signal processor is not needed to analyze channels that come out of a Ds0 switching matrix to determine if the channel can be suppressed or not, because the suppressed status stays with the channel. An example of an intermediate node, and also

edge switches, is disclosed in a co-pending patent application U.S. Serial No. 09/452,956, which lists Forrest L. Pierson, Jr. as inventor, entitled "Method and System for Implementing an Improved Ds0 switching Capability in a Data Switch" filed on December 2, 1999, which is hereby incorporated by reference.

Please replace the paragraph at page 18, lines 15-21 with the following amended paragraph:

Figures 5(a)-(e) depict the structure of frame relay packets with sixteen Ds0 channels per cell that might be produced using the preferred method. CRC represents cyclic redundancy check, which typically is two bytes long and is located at the end of the packet. As with the examples illustrated in Figures 4(b)-(d), L1 and L2 represent the bytes used to identify which of the sixteen channels are suppressed, if any, and may be located any where anywhere in the frame relay packet. Figure 4(a) 5(a) illustrates a frame relay packet with no channels are being suppressed.

Please replace the paragraph at page 18, line 22 to page 19, line 2 with the following amended paragraph:

Figures 4(b)-(e) 5(b)-(e) depict various numbers of channels being suppressed, which then reduces the overall size of the frame relay packet. Figure 4(b) 5(b) illustrates a frame relay packet with five channels being suppressed by removing channels 3, 6, 8, 12, and 13. Figure 4(c) 5(c) depicts a frame relay packet with seven channels being suppressed by removing channels 1, 3, 6, 8, 12, 13, and 14. Figure 4(d) 5(d) illustrates a frame relay packet in which the same seven channels as in Figure 4(c) 5(c) are

suppressed, but adds a fourth voice frame in this frame relay packet. Figure 4(e) 5(e)

depicts a frame relay packet with all of the channels being suppressed, which results in an

indefinite number of voice frames per packet.

REMARKS

The specification has been amended to correct minor typographical errors and to include the serial number of the referenced patent application. Claim 1 has been canceled and claims 2-24 have been added. Claims 2-24 are now pending in this application.
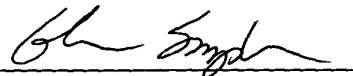
New claims 2-24 are supported by the original specification and figures. No new matter has been introduced. These claims are believed to be allowable over the prior art of record cited in the parent application. Accordingly, allowance of claims 2-24 is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 13-2491 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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